

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration of this application as presently amended and in light of the following discussion is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-30, 33-42 and 73 are pending in the present application with Claims 19, 35 and 73 having been amended by the present amendment.

In the outstanding Office Action, a copy of the previously filed Information Disclosure Statement was requested; Claim 73 was objected to; Claim 19 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Lee in view of Shuzo; Claim 20 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Lee in view of Shuzo and Kataoka; Claims 21 and 22 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Lee in view of Shuzo and Hiyamizu et al.; Claims 1-8, 23-30 and 33 were allowed; and Claim 73 would be allowable if amended to correct the objection noted in the outstanding Office Action.

Applicants thank the Examiner for the indication of allowable subject matter and for the courtesy of an interview extended to Applicants' representative on August 28, 2003. During the interview, the differences between the present invention and the applied art were discussed. No agreement was reached pending the Examiner's further review when a response is filed. Arguments presented during the interview are reiterated below.

Enclosed is a copy of the previously filed Information Disclosure Statement as requested by the Examiner.

Further, regarding the objection to Claim 73, Claim 73 has been amended as suggested in the outstanding Office Action. Accordingly, it is respectfully requested this rejection be withdrawn.

Claim 19 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Lee in view of Shuzo. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 19 has been amended to include subject matter similar to that recited in dependent Claim 5 and to recite that the through-hole directly communicates with air within the substrate carriage chamber. In more detail, amended Claim 19 is directed to an optical disk substrate film-formation apparatus including a substrate holder which holds thereon a substrate as an object for film formation the substrate holder includes a groove section in a portion where said substrate holder contacts said substrate when said substrate holder is holding said substrate, a porous member which can allow air to pass through provided within said groove section in which the surface of the porous member is at a same level as the surface of substrate holder, and a through-hole which connects said groove section to the portion where said substrate holder does not contact said substrate when said substrate holder is holding said substrate. Further, the substrate holder is located between a film-formation chamber in which film formation for a substrate is performed and a substrate carriage chamber in which a pressure is maintained at a lower level than that in said film-formation chamber, and the through-hole directly communicates with air within the substrate carriage chamber (as noted above).

In a non-limiting example, Figures 16 and 17 illustrate a through-hole 306 and Figure 2 illustrates that the substrate holder is located between a film-formation chamber 2a in which film formation for a substrate is performed and a substrate carriage chamber 10 in which a pressure is maintained at a lower level than that in the film-formation chamber 2a. As shown in Figure 17, the through-hole directly communicates with air within the substrate carriage chamber.

Thus, air can easily pass through the member because it is porous, so that it is possible to prevent problems in carriage (such as failure of a transport robot in taking up the substrate 302 or deformation of the robot arm associated with the failure), and air-tight contact

(vacuum adsorption) between the substrate holder and substrate when removing the substrate (see page 46, lines 10-16).

During the interview, it was noted Shuzo teaches a through-hole 4a, 4b, 4c etc. However, the through-holes are connected to other air passages 8a, 8b, 8c etc, and thus do not directly communicate with air within a carriage chamber. In fact, Shuzo does not teach a substrate carriage chamber. Lee also does not teach or suggest the claimed through-hole directly communicating with air within a substrate carriage chamber. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted independent Claim 19 and each of the claims depending therefrom are also allowable.

Further, regarding the additional rejections of Claims 20-22 noted in the outstanding Office Action, Kataoka et al. and Hiyamizu et al. also do not teach or suggest the claimed through-hole. Accordingly, it is respectfully requested these rejections also be withdrawn.

Consequently, in light of the above discussion and in view of the present amendment, the present application is believed to be in condition for allowance and an early and favorable action to that effect is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

OBLON, SPIVAK, McCLELLAND,
MAIER & NEUSTADT, P.C.



Gregory J. Maier
Attorney of Record
Registration No. 25,599
David A. Bilodeau
Registration No. 42,325



22850

Tel: (703) 413-3000
Fax: (703) 413 -2220

I:\ATTY\DAB\05574909-AM.DOC